

charity. It serves our own national security and strategic interests for international borders to continue to actually mean something. It serves our own security and interest to impose massive costs on Putin's long-running campaign of violent imperialism. And it directly and powerfully serves our national interest to deter potential future wars of aggression before they start.

So, Madam President, I assure you that President Xi and the CCP are watching Ukraine carefully. There is a concrete reason why democratic Asian countries like Japan and Taiwan are rooting hard for Ukraine to prevail. Moreover, if we are stuck in a long-term strategic competition with China, we will want a stable, secure, and strong Europe on our side.

Speaking of America's national interest, our delegation also visited what we hope and expect will soon be the two newest members of the NATO alliance. We arrived in Stockholm and Helsinki just as the leaders of Sweden and Finland announced their nations will seek to join the alliance that has secured peace in Europe for more than 73 years.

It was an honor to have robust discussions with Prime Minister Andersson, Defense Minister Hultqvist, and key parliamentary leaders in Stockholm; and President Niinistö, Prime Minister Marin, Defense Minister Kaikkonen, and parliamentary leaders in Helsinki. I gave them my assurance as Senate Republican leader that I fully support both Finland's and Sweden's accession. I will do all I can to speed treaty ratification through the Senate.

Finland and Sweden are impressive and capable countries, with military capabilities that surpass many of our existing NATO allies. As new members, they would more than pull their weight.

These two nations' geographic locations are strategic. They have well-equipped and professional armed forces. Their military and high-tech industrial bases are robust. There is already significant interoperability that connects their defenses and NATO's. I will have more to say on this subject in the days and weeks ahead. Finland and Sweden would make NATO even stronger than it stands today.

Finally, it must be noted that our delegation was not the most important group of Americans shipping out to stand with our friends in Europe—not by a longshot. There are 100,000 American soldiers currently stationed in Europe to bolster the peace and shore up NATO. This includes the Kentucky-based V Corps.

And we received word just last week that 4,700 members of the 101st Airborne from Kentucky's Fort Campbell will also travel to Europe in the coming months. The Screaming Eagles have a long history of defending America's national security interests in Europe. I am proud of these brave men

and women for being ready to deploy at a moment's notice. I am proud America can make this peaceful contribution to our allies' sovereignty and strength in Europe, and I am proud of the entire Fort Campbell community for keeping these men and women well-prepared for this mission.

## THE ECONOMY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Madam President, now on another matter, by early 2020, before the pandemic, Republican policies had helped create one of the best economic moments for working Americans literally in our lifetimes. Unemployment was low, inflation was low, and real take-home pay was rising steadily. In fact, we had wages rising faster for the bottom 25 percent of the wage scale than for the top 25 percent.

The incoming all-Democratic government was handed a reopening economy and a million vaccines going into arms per day. The country was packed with optimism and primed for a comeback. But through their far-left policy choices, Washington Democrats have driven our economy right into the ground. Inflation is setting 40-year records in consecutive months; gas and diesel prices have set new all-time highs on consecutive days; and sticker shock continues to cause headaches for Americans buying household essentials.

One college student in California said that buying groceries has him "taking extra loans to pay for my expenses. I'm maxing out my credit cards." A woman in Virginia reports she has taken to visiting three different food stores in one trip to make sure she is getting the best prices on everything she needs. A warehouse worker in New Jersey says she and her husband are spending more time hunting for coupons.

It's not a lot, but I'm trying to buy healthy things that also fill us up.

Overall grocery prices have jumped 10 percent in the past year, just one part of why many Americans say the Biden economy is not working for them. Fewer than one in four American consumers say the current economic conditions are even somewhat good, and fewer than one in five say the Biden administration's policies have done anything to help.

Democrats made runaway reckless spending their new normal here in Washington. So historic, painful inflation has become the new normal for working families everywhere else.

## CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

## LEGISLATIVE SESSION

### ADDITIONAL UKRAINE SUPPLEMENTAL APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2022—MOTION TO PROCEED—Resumed

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of a motion to proceed to H.R. 7691, which the clerk will report.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

Motion to proceed to Calendar No. 368, H.R. 7691, a bill making emergency supplemental appropriations for assistance for the situation in Ukraine for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2022, and for other purposes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Kentucky.

H.R. 7691

Mr. PAUL. Madam President, today the Senate is considering a bill to give \$40 billion to Ukraine. This bill brings up the questions of both constitutionality and also affordability.

There was an essay written in 1867 that was published in Harper's Magazine. It was called "Not Yours To Give." It is the story of Davy Crockett as a Congressman in the late 1820s. Like most stories of that vintage, some will argue that the story is an accurate rendition while others may say it is apocryphal. The moral of the story, however, is incontestable.

Davy Crockett only served two terms in Congress, but on one day in Congress he was confronted with a bill to give money to the widow of a military officer. Davy Crockett arose and gave this speech.

Mr. Speaker—I have as much respect for the memory of the deceased, and as much sympathy for the sufferings of the living, if suffering there be, as any man in this House, but we must not permit our respect for the dead or our sympathy for a part of the living to lead us into an act of injustice to the balance of the living.

We have the right, as individuals, to give away as much of our own money as we please in charity; but as members of Congress we have no right so to appropriate a dollar of the public money.

Davy Crockett continued:

I am the poorest man on this floor. I cannot vote for this bill, but I will give one week's pay—

I will give my check for 1 week, and if every member of Congress were to do this, it will amount to more than this bill asks for.

When Crockett finished, there was silence, and, remarkably, the bill failed. When later asked for an explanation, Davy Crockett explained.

He said:

Several years ago I was one evening standing on the steps of the Capitol with some other members of Congress, when [we saw] a great light over in Georgetown. It was evidently a large fire. We jumped into a hack and drove over as fast as we could. In spite of all that could be done, many houses were burned and many families made homeless, and, besides, some of them had lost all but the clothes they had on. The weather was very cold, and when I saw so many women and children suffering, I felt that something